

Management Strategies for Columbia River Recreational and Commercial Fisheries-- 2013 and Beyond

*Oregon and Washington Staff Options for
Initial Analysis and Discussion*



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Background

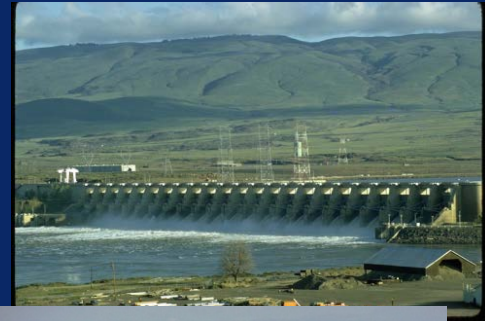
- **Recreational and commercial fisheries economically vital to OR and WA**
- **Priority: Optimizing economic value within conservation framework**
- **Fisheries currently constrained by ESA**
- **Perennial conflict among users on how best to manage non-tribal fisheries**
- **Conflicts divide stakeholders and communities and detract from recovery efforts**

Approach

- **Incorporates concepts in Governor Kitzhaber's proposal to the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission**
- **Includes additional details developed by Oregon and Washington staff**
- **Recognizes that Oregon and Washington Commissions will make final determinations**
- **Includes a transition period (4-year; 2013-2016) to avoid significant economic harm to commercial fishery**

Guiding Principles

- Leadership on fish recovery
- Conserve ESA & weak species; meet commitments to Treaty Tribes
- Enhance overall economic benefits
- Develop selective gear and techniques; phase out non-selective gill nets in the mainstem
- Prioritize recreational fisheries in mainstem; commercial in off-channel
- Enhance off-channel commercial fisheries



Transition Period (2013-2016)

- Mainstem gill nets allowed while selective gears and techniques developed
- Only partially shift additional mainstem priority (e.g., impacts) to recreational fisheries
- Enhance off-channel areas (e.g., fish, infrastructure); additional returns from initial smolt releases began this year (2012) for spring Chinook
- Develop, evaluate and implement additional selective fishing methods
- Secure support and resources for implementation

Allocations During Transition Period

- Upriver Spring Chinook, Summer Chinook and Sockeye: Would assign 70% of the allowable incidental take or harvestable surplus to mainstem recreational fisheries
- Tule and Upriver Bright Fall Chinook: Would assign no more than 70% of the allowable incidental take to mainstem recreational fisheries to meet management objectives
- Coho: Would assign commercial fisheries a sufficient share of the allowable incidental-take to implement coho and fall Chinook commercial fisheries in off-channel sites and fall Chinook commercial fisheries in the mainstem, as well as directed coho in the mainstem when impacts available

Allocations During Transition Period

- Chum: Would assign commercial fisheries a sufficient share of the allowable incidental-take of ESA-listed chum to implement coho and fall Chinook commercial fisheries in off-channel sites and salmon commercial fisheries in the mainstem
- White Sturgeon: Would hold 10% of harvestable surplus in reserve as a conservation buffer. Would assign 80% of the balance to mainstem recreational fisheries and 20% to commercial fisheries

Mainstem Commercial Fishing During Transition Period

General:

- Would use selective gear if available and practical
- Would provide additional mainstem commercial fishing opportunity if:
 - mainstem recreational fisheries unable to fully use impacts/shares
 - objectives for mainstem recreational fisheries met



Mainstem Commercial Fishing During Transition Period

Specifically:

- Sockeye: If NOAA increases allowable impact, would provide increased harvest opportunity
- Tule Fall Chinook: If alternative selective gear is implemented, would provide impacts to commercially harvest hatchery tules to help reduce strays
- Upriver Bright Fall Chinook: Would focus harvest upstream of the Lewis River. Downstream from the Lewis River would provide additional harvest opportunity as alternative selective gear is developed

Enhanced Production at Off-Channel Sites During Transition Period

- Spring Chinook: Would increase by 1 million fish annually
 - 250,000 by Oregon in 2010
 - 500,000 by Oregon in 2013
 - 200,000 - 250,000 by Washington (funding dependent)
- Coho: Would increase by 1 million fish annually
 - 800,000 by Oregon in 2013
 - 200,000 by Washington in 2013
- Select Area Bright Fall Chinook: Oregon would increase by 500,000 annually, beginning 2013 if possible

Opportunities to Expand Off-Channel Sites During the Transition Period

- Existing Off-Channel Sites: Oregon seek funding to:
 - Evaluate feasibility of more commercial fishing time
 - Evaluate feasibility of expanding fishable area
- New Off-Channel Sites: Oregon and Washington would seek funding to:
 - Evaluate feasibility of establishing new sites in Oregon and Washington

Allocations and Mainstem Fishing in Long Term (Beyond 2016)

General:

- Non-tribal mainstem commercial fisheries would be restricted to the use of selective gear/techniques
- Additional mainstem commercial fishing when:
 - mainstem recreational fisheries are unable to fully use their impacts/shares
 - objectives for mainstem recreational fisheries are met



Allocations and Mainstem Fishing in Long Term (Beyond 2016)

Specifically:

- Spring and Summer Chinook: Would assign a sufficient share (80%) of incidental take or harvestable surplus to recreational fisheries in the mainstem to meet management objectives
- Sockeye: Would assign a sufficient share (~80%) of incidental take to recreational fisheries in the mainstem to meet management objectives. If NOAA Fisheries increases the allowable incidental take, would provide increased commercial harvest opportunity

Allocations and Mainstem Fishing in the Long Term (Beyond 2016)

- Tule Fall Chinook: Would assign a sufficient share ($\leq 80\%$) of impacts to mainstem recreational fisheries to meet management objectives. Would provide impacts to commercially harvest hatchery tules to help reduce strays
- Upriver Bright Fall Chinook: Would assign a sufficient share ($\leq 80\%$) of impacts to recreational fisheries in the mainstem to meet management objectives. Focus mainstem commercial fishery upstream of Lewis River. Downstream from Lewis River would provide commercial opportunity in selective tule fall Chinook and coho fisheries

Allocations and Mainstem Fishing in Long Term (Beyond 2016)

- Coho and Chum: Would assign commercial fisheries a sufficient share of the allowable incidental-take to implement coho and fall Chinook commercial fisheries in off-channel sites and fall Chinook commercial fisheries in the mainstem, as well as directed coho in the mainstem when impacts available
- White Sturgeon: Would hold 10% of harvestable surplus in reserve as a conservation buffer. Would assign 80% of the balance to mainstem recreational fisheries and 20% to commercial fisheries

Enhanced Production at Existing Off-Channel Sites in Long Term (Beyond 2016)

- Spring Chinook: Could increase by 1.25 M fish annually (includes increased production during transition period)
 - 950,000 – 1 million during transition period
 - Additional 250,000 by OR (funding dependent)
- Coho: Could increase by 4.8 M fish annually (includes increased production during transition period)
 - 1 million during the transition period
 - Additional 3.8 M by OR (funding dependent)

Enhanced Production at Existing Off-Channel Sites in Long Term (Beyond 2016)

- Select Area Bright Fall Chinook: Could increase by 750,000 fish annually (includes increased production during the transition period)
 - 500,000 during the transition period
 - Additional 250,000 by OR (funding dependent)

Expansion of Off-Channel Commercial Fisheries in Long Term (Beyond 2016)

- Existing Off-Channel Sites: If evaluations during transition period indicate feasible:
 - Would provide more fishing time
 - Would expand the fishable area
- New Off-Channel Sites: If evaluations during transition period indicate feasible:
 - would establish new sites in Oregon and Washington

Adaptive Management

Adjustments could be made to the long-term management framework if one or more of the following triggers occur:

- Significantly lower than expected returns to off-channel sites
- Insufficient space in off-channel sites to accommodate the commercial fleet
- Significantly lower than expected mainstem commercial harvest using selective gears
- Circumstances that delay or preclude use of selective techniques or enhancement of off-channel fish production

Adaptive Management

(cont'd):

- Significantly lower than expected economic return to commercial fishers
- Conflicts with terms of the *US v Oregon* Management Agreement
- Failure to meet conservation needs

Questions?

